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**ROMNEY ADMINISTRATION AWARDS \$2.3 MILLION
FOR DRINKING WATER PROTECTION**

Environmental Affairs Secretary Robert W. Golledge Jr. and Acting DEP Commissioner Arleen O'Donnell today announced Drinking Water Supply Protection grants totaling \$2.3 million will be awarded to seven cities and towns. The funds will help them to acquire and protect 625 acres of land that is critical for the continued supply of safe drinking water. The following municipalities and water suppliers received drinking water supply protection grants:

- The Town of Carver (\$500,000) to acquire 123 acres of land for a new drinking water well site;
- The City of Leominster (\$188,813) to acquire 50 acres of land to protect Notown Reservoir, the city's largest drinking water supply;
- The Town of Middleborough (\$330,000) to acquire a conservation restriction on 211 acres of land to protect Black Brook, the primary tributary stream to the Assawompsett Ponds Complex;
- The City of New Bedford (\$470,000) to acquire a conservation restriction on 97 acres of land to protect Black Brook, the primary tributary stream to the Assawompsett Ponds Complex;
- The South Grafton Water District (\$108,687) to acquire a critical parcel of land within the Ferry Street Well Zone I radius;
- The City of Taunton (352,500) to acquire a conservation restriction on 65 acres of land to protect Black Brook, the primary tributary stream to the Assawompsett Ponds Complex; and
- The City of Worcester (\$350,000) to acquire a conservation restriction on 75 acres of land to protect Holden Reservoir #1, the city's highest-priority drinking water supply.

"Over the past three years this program has awarded more than \$7.8 million to help 20 cities and towns protect over 1,500 acres of land," said Golledge. "The strong community participation we've seen with this program is testament to its worth, and we are pleased to expand our assistance in protecting these drinking water supplies."

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Acting Commissioner O'Donnell added: "The partnerships that we have established between the state and local communities are vital to water supply protection, and these grants will help maintain open space within our watersheds and ensure the Commonwealth's residents have a safe and clean drinking water supply now and into the future."

The Drinking Water Supply Protection grant program provides funding to public water systems and municipalities for land acquisitions that protect public drinking water supplies and drinking water quality. All parcels for which assistance is provided through this grant program must be open to the public and are considered protected open space under Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution.

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